

Nelson Focus Group Session

Tuesday, October 26, 2004

Attendance:

Perspective	Focus Group
Project Team	Laurie Gallant - Footprint Julia Roberts - Footprint Chris Bullock - Western Bioresources Reinhard Trautmann RDCK
Hauler	Mark Randall (recycling service)
Local Organics Diversion	Karina Gregory (potential small composting project) Fiona MacKay – Celgar (Open House Only)
Institution	
Business	Peter Taillon - grocery store Katri Skogster - restaurant
Resident	Christina Scanlon Tony Lippert Tom Prior Lisa Canfield Tom Smith
Local Gov't	Barry Turner Donna MacDonald Michelle Mungall
Tourism/Econ. Dev't	

Focus Group Agenda

1. Welcome and session overview
2. Introductions – name and perspective
3. Project overview and key decisions
4. Video: On the Road to Zero Waste: Nova Scotia
5. Service Levels: Collection System Options
6. Supporting Education and Policy
7. Economics: Business Structure and Cost Recovery Options
8. Decisions and Next Steps.

WHAT WE HEARD

PROJECT COMPONENT	DATA	CONCERNS	SOLUTION
General	<p>RDCK composts yard waste and construction waste from Nelson. 42% of Trail landfill is organic material. Celgar pulp fibre 80 cubic m./day – this material is easy to work with, consistent quality, high in nutrients. No de-inked pulp feedstock targeted for this project. Sewage biosolids are composted and used on cemetery – grows good grass but contains heavy metals. Food waste and soiled paper works well for composting. Plastic will be a problem in compost – highly visible.</p>	<p>Make it easy to do the right thing; already on the road to zero waste. Is zero waste realistic? No time, money or space in household. Leave room for small entrepreneurs. City is looking for ways to reduce garbage odours – good timing for project. Wish timelines were shorter for residential service. Future liability for businesses that use the compost? Will disposable diapers and adult diapers be included?</p>	<p>Make garbage more expensive. Put limits on how much garbage is collected. What is collected will impact quality of product and end markets, but also capture rates and total diversion from landfill. Add Slocan City and southward to core area (garbage goes to Ooteschenia landfill) nb. New Denver garbage goes to Nakusp.</p>
Service level	<p>200 tonnes/year of organics going to landfill from one grocery store. Nelson just started biweekly garbage collection service; every bag costs \$1 to collect. Confirm details of Canmore and Guelph programs.</p>	<p>Businesses need collection of waxed cardboard, dairy. Impact on backyard composting – freedom to choose level of service. Commercial garbage is more expensive than residential garbage – want organics option SOON. Need a way to recycle plastics, computer parts. Bi-weekly organics collection will lower capture rate if garbage is weekly. Storage space for organics could be a problem.</p>	<p>Make service convenient, easy, and cheap. Dual or multi-compartment trucks could change economics. Recycling and compost one week, garbage the next week. Bi-weekly organics with monthly garbage might work. Seasonal variations? Grocery stores can store organics in “septic tanks”. New housing developments should have a central organics tank – saves on trucking costs. Add neighbourhood organic tanks –one every 5 blocks – shouldn’t be more than a 2-3 minute walk. Could hire a kid to drop off organics.</p>

Ownership/ Operation			
Cost Recovery	Nelson utility bill includes sewer/water/garbage. If composting facility is in Castlegar, hauling distances are shortened for Nelson (vs landfill). Kelowna successfully markets their biosolids compost “Ogogrow”.	Transportation related costs: Highway maintenance, fuel, GHG emissions. Is rail an option? Keep costs comparable to present garbage system. What if Celgar opts out or closes?	Divert savings from garage pickup to composting/recycling service. Ask province for rebate on highway costs as a result of fewer garbage truck miles. Consider penalties for not separating organics from garbage (landfill surcharge?). Use compost for municipal project to save on purchasing other growing mediums.
Supporting education and policy	Participation rates in Nova Scotia program not as high as they would like. Nelson recycling rates are high.	Paradigm shifting needed.	Municipalities need detailed implementation plan – bite size chunks; want full-cost analysis. Webcam or static photo displays of landfill at transfer stations and grocery stores.

Final Decisions/Next Steps:

1. Look for markets and ways to increase product quality.
2. Highlight “No Celgar Option” in report/presentation.
3. Don’t reinvent the wheel – learn from other communities.
4. Talk to municipal staff about feasibility of proposed ideas.
5. Keep costs about the same as present garbage costs.
6. Consider community based or block by block composting, not just central facility.
7. Present conclusions/recommendation in manageable steps.
8. Leave room for smaller entrepreneurs/ support entrepreneurs.
9. Education is needed.

Surveys and Workbooks will be tabulated in a separate report.